



H.R. 6295 – TO AMEND TITLE 18, UNITED STATES CODE, TO PROHIBIT OPERATION BY ANY MEANS OR EMBARKING IN ANY SUBMERSIBLE OR SEMI-SUBMERSIBLE VESSEL THAT IS WITHOUT NATIONALITY AND THAT IS NAVIGATING OR HAS NAVIGATED INTO, THROUGH OR FROM WATERS BEYOND THE OUTER LIMIT OF THE TERRITORIAL SEA OF A SINGLE COUNTRY OR A LATERAL LIMIT OF THAT COUNTRY'S TERRITORIAL SEA WITH AN ADJACENT COUNTRY, AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES

FLOOR SITUATION

H.R. 6295 is being considered on the floor under suspension of the rules and will require a two-thirds majority vote for passage. This legislation was introduced by Representative Daniel Lungren (R-CA) on June 18, 2008. The bill was referred to the House Committee on the Judiciary, but was never considered.

H.R. 6295 is expected to be considered on the floor of the House on July 29, 2008.

SUMMARY

H.R. 6295 prohibits the intentional operation of a submersible or semi-submersible water vessel that is without identifiable nationality and is navigating into, through, or from waters in an adjacent country's territorial seas.

According to the bill, a vessel's identity can be claimed with documents carried on board the vessel, verbal identification, or by flying a country's flag or ensign. The bill makes such an act, or conspiring to commit such an act, punishable by no more than 20 years of imprisonment.

BACKGROUND

The Coast Guard estimated that over a four month span in early 2008, an estimated 122 tons of cocaine valued at nearly \$2.7 billion was successfully delivered to the U.S. by self-propelled semi-submersible vessels whose nationality could not be identified.

Under current law, federally punishable maritime offenses include the transportation of explosive, chemical, or nuclear weapons; the transportation of terrorists; and the transportation of drugs into the U.S. Under H.R. 6295, failure to provide national identification would be added as a punishable offense under federal law.

COST

The Congressional Budget Office did not have a cost estimate available for H.R. 6295 as of July 29, 2008.

STAFF CONTACT

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